

State Advisory Committee (SAC) For Children with Disabilities
Advising the NH Department of Education Per RSA 186-C:3-b
NH Department of Education
Room 15
November 6, 2013
Meeting Minutes
4:30-7:00pm

In Attendance: Sue Marcotte-Jenkins, Ellen Boudreau, Denise Maher, Mike Pinard, Kestrel Cole-McCrea, Dan Ward, Candace Cole-McCrea, Jeanne Saunders, Mary Ellen Pantazis, Lynda Thistle-Elliot, Cheryl Pacquette, Janet Reed, Catherine Meister, Maureen Tracey, Dick Cohen, Bonnie Dunham.

Guests: Heidi Cloutier, Tom Grinley, Tamara Le, Ralph Tilton, Santina Thibedeau, Eileen Mullen, Mike McGeehan,

Agenda Item I: Welcome, Introductions, Approval of Minutes, Public Comment

- Bonnie welcomed SAC members and guests and asked for introductions.
- October minutes were approved by Candace Cole-McCrea and seconded by Ellen Boudreau. All in favor with two abstentions.
- No public Comment

Agenda Item II: Guest Speakers: Eileen Mullen~ Fostering Connections Program, Mike McGeehan ~ NH DCYF:

- Eileen Mullen explained the two components of the fostering connections program that she works with; educational and adoption of foster children into families. Data shows that foster children have lower educational outcomes. Provisions for children had to be placed close in proximity to school/home. Transportation changes prompted how plans were done and how to better assure educational needs would be met. Fostering Connections is a successful program.
- Mike McGeehan from DCYF works with NH Bridges; helping child protection workers track kids. It also pays claims to providers, who are paying for children's education. The process is that file would come from NHDOE, then processed in the DCYF file to update their files and figure out who their kids are, then finally inputted into NH Bridges. Mike has worked with Ralph Tilton in the Bureau of Special Education to work out what is called the "Interface System". Mike and Ralph would like interface up and running together. However, financial resources are needed for the initial start up. A statutory change needs to be made to move this forward. There are other states, such as Maryland, who have gone through this placement and have written a memo of understanding. The interface would be able to report back to the federal government. It cannot be done currently under the current statute.
- SAC members would like to review the piece of RSA before making a recommendation. Any other states information would be helpful. Also, looking for language from statute, federal requirements/samples of other states. Mike and Eileen will mail Terry Stafford information on RSA 193E of what entities are being effected by this RSA. Senator Nancy Stiles could be a potential sponsor, or SAC could at least, make her aware of the issues.

Agenda Item III: Subcommittee reports:

- *Secondary Transition Report* ~ Ellen Boudreau

A draft of a Flow Chart was created on the topics of discussion with in the subcommittee and will be emailed out to everyone.

- *Unmet Needs Report* ~ Maureen Tracey

Legislative Initiative for MTSS for all schools in NH

Dick had spoken with governor (separate from sac)
Looking at PBIS & the achievement gap
Having a ground swell of support making MTSS a major priority for all children
Need to build coalition for MTSS
Students with disability have been incarcerated
Restraint & using PBIS in the same language
Bring back to
Swift Schools
Money Incentives
Higher Ed
Teacher evaluation
Teacher
Whole school evaluation

- *Special Education Financing/Funding Report*: Bonnie Dunham

Special Education Financing/Funding Subcommittee Report

November 6, 2013

– Sue Marcotte-Jenkins, Mary Ellen Pantazis, Bonnie Dunham and Renea Sparks –

The subcommittee generated a list of issues impacting special education finance/funding:

- CAT AID
- Meeting the needs of children with disabilities who are homeless
- Providing FAPE to students with disabilities enrolled in chartered public schools
- Differences in how grants are allocated (i.e. Medicaid vs. McKinney-Vento)
- Medicaid to Schools funding
- When special education funds are reimbursed to the city/town by Medicaid or some of the other sources, those funds do not go into the school budget, but are diverted to the municipality
- Out-of-district funding / Rate setting
- Legislation intended to address funding issues and caution re: avoiding unintended consequences (i.e. if the NH DOE must fund CAT AID at 100%, what happens if the legislature does not allocate adequate revenue)?
- Special education funding in the context of all education funding

One problem that was identified is the stigma experienced by families of children with disabilities (especially during municipal budget or school district budget meetings) because of the cost of special education and the lack of awareness of the funding sources that support special education

Bonnie will provide a copy of an old special education funding article to committee members, which we can use as a starting point to draft an explanation of this complex issue

Possibly Santina and Renea can speak about funding sources, cost containment and cost recovery

Planned action steps:

- Gather information / data
- Draft information in a reader-friendly format (or as user-friendly as it can be)
 - Ensure that the information includes facts about the costs of not educating students with disabilities (including the benefits of early education and reducing the number of drop-outs)
- Provide information to SAC
- Develop a dissemination plan
- Provide information to the general public
- Consider if there should be legislation introduced to make the funding system work more effectively and ensure sufficient funding to provide FAPE for all students with disabilities

Agenda Item IV: Bureau of Special Education Update: Santina Thibedeau

- Santina reviewed the Charter School System, how and why services can be provided. The *Charter Schools Organization* has published a brochure titled: Engage ~ “NH Innovations in Education 2013”. The brochure was created on a 3D printer, and includes the new charter schools within the NH public school system: New Birches, Making Community Connections (MC2), Mills Falls, NEXT, PACE Career Academy, Polaris, Robert Frost, TEAMS.
- There is a new process in the Office of Legislation at the NHDOE, regarding *Informal Third Party Discussion, led by a Moderator*. A memo went out on October 15th to all Superintendents. Terry Stafford will email a copy out to all SAC members.
- The NHDOE has made efforts to have multi-tiered supports in districts relative to student bullying.
- SAC was invited to a Developmental Disabilities Council (DD Council) for a secondary transition meeting. Also, Donna Couture, of Next Steps NH, from the Bureau has agreed to partner and join forces with the secondary transition subcommittee.
- There is a new Safe Schools Grant with in the Bureau: It currently is on the governor’s agenda for governor and council approval. Three school districts have been chosen to be pilot sites for this grant; Laconia, Rochester, and Concord. The schools had to have a certain percentage of behavior, refugees, school based mental health for components. Also, looking at substance abuse and bullying issues. In the pilot sites, there was discussion to have local health offices with in the school.
- Santina reviewed the Read and Write Gold project.

Agenda Item V: Legislative Update ~ Bonnie, Update from SAC Liaisons, Correspondence, Announcements, Current Events.

- Bonnie reviewed the handout of legislative education bills or LSRs.
- Sue Marcotte-Jenkins handed out the Take Away Notes from the ICC Annual Retreat.
- Correspondence was received on a free AFB teleseminar on Computerized Common Core Assessments: How will Students with Vision Loss Fare?
- Mary Lane of the Bureau will get SAC information about the Indicator 8 Parent Involvement Group to recruit a new SAC liaison for the group.

Agenda Item VI: Old Business

- SAC still has vacancies ~
- Two guests interested in SAC, gave introductions: Tamara Le, and Heidi Cloutier. Both completed the IOD leadership series. *Heidi* became a renew trainer in 1999, is a mental health coordinator and family service transition planning. She is a parent of two boys who both have learning disabilities. Would be a member representing the Institutes of Higher Education (IHE).
Tamara Le has a daughter with autism. Tamara became a legislative liaison and went to work with NH Connections and Parent Information Center as a group leader, training potential advocates. She also ran for school board. As a SAC member she would represent parents.
- Santina will give an overview of Data Driven Report that is on the DOE website, at the December meeting.
- Also, at next meeting, would like the bureau to provide answers on handout.

Agenda Item VII: New Business, Emerging Issues, Public Comment:

- An emerging issue is relative to transportation log in private special education programs. A new law went into affect on October 10th and effects private schools. It is a department of safety legislation. Jeff Blaney is the contact person on this issue from the NH DOE.
- No Public Comment

Agenda Item VIII: Adjournment:

- Ellen Boudreau made a motion to adjourn the meeting at 7:10pm, and Janet Reed seconded the motion. All in favor.